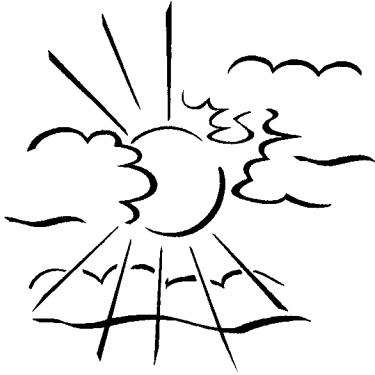


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Articles in Today's Clips

Friday, August 5, 2005

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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Friday, August 5, 2005

Battle Creek Enquirer

EDITORIAL

Fostering stability Family to Family can help kids in foster care

Few things are more traumatic for a child than to be removed from his or her home and placed in foster care. Such a move usually is necessitated because a parent cannot properly care for the child. It could be a matter of substance abuse and addiction, emotional or mental problems, etc. Sometimes children are removed from the home to protect them from neglect or abuse.

Separated from their parents, such children often are frightened and uncertain about what will happen to them. They usually are in desperate need of assurance that although they no longer are with their parents, they will be taken care of. Unfortunately, the foster-care system too often only adds to a child's insecurity by moving him or her from foster home to foster home, requiring a change in schools and a different neighborhood.

Such instability only compounds a child's problems.

That is why state officials are enthusiastic about a new program called Family to Family that seeks to ensure that when children must be removed from the home, they are placed with one stable family in the children's own community, until they can be reunited with their birth families or they are released for adoption. When possible, the program places children with a family member or close family friend with whom they are familiar.

This means that while the children may be separated from their parents, they still can attend the same school and keep the same friends they have had, providing them with some sense of stability, even amid turmoil in their family.

Family to Family began in 2002 in parts of Wayne County and has expanded to other counties. It has proven so successful that the Michigan Department of Human Services now wants to implement it throughout the state over the next three years.

Facilitators are a key component of Family to Family. They work with birth parents, foster families and social workers to determine what is best for the children.

Family to Family utilizes four key strategies in helping provide a stable environment for children in foster care:

Community partnerships utilizing neighborhood resources to help children.

Neighborhood-based recruitment, retention, training and support of foster parents. Most counties involved in Family to Family have seen an increase in the number of foster parents recruited and retained.

A self-evaluation process to track where children are placed and use data to determine if outcomes improve as a result of their involvement in Family to Family.

Team decision-making involving regular consultations with birth and foster parents and encouraging contact between them.

Marianne Udow, director of the Michigan Department of Human Services, told The Detroit News that Family to Family represents "a whole new approach to foster care and to child welfare."

As of 2003, there were about 19,000 children in foster care in Michigan. Udow hopes that Family to Family can reduce that number by 20 percent by 2009.

While it will not work in every case, we hope Family to Family can help give many children in foster care a sense of stability and security that will help them deal successfully with the issues they face.

Originally published August 5, 2005

Ann Arbor News

8/4/05

IN BRIEF

State to revamp foster-care system

LANSING - The Granholm administration is making changes in Michigan' foster-care system, trying harder to keep children in their home communities.

The Family to Family program will seek to put children with family members or those they know and to keep them in the same schools. It also will seek to involve the children's birth parents in decisions about them.

"It's a whole new approach to foster care and to child welfare," said Marianne Udow, director of the Department of Human Services.

The program began on a pilot basis in Wayne County in 2002. Officials say they want to implement it statewide over the next three years.

There were about 8,500 foster parents in Michigan caring for 19,000 foster children in 2003. Udow said she hopes to reduce the number of foster children by 20 percent by 2009.

Under Family to Family, the state will hire facilitators to work as intermediaries among case workers, foster parents and families with children in foster care.

Friday, August 5, 2005

Uninsured kids often not treated

A study finds that 33% of children without any insurance didn't see a doctor once in a year.

By Petula Dvorak / Washington Post

WASHINGTON -- The number of children with medical insurance is increasing across the country, the result of outreach efforts and streamlining of government eligibility requirements.

But among the millions of uninsured children, many of them African-American and Latino, one in three goes a year without seeing a doctor, according to a report by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

"The number of uninsured children continues to be in the millions. No child should go without health care," said U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona, who addressed the "Covering Kids and Families" foundation's annual campaign to encourage parents to sign up their children for health insurance.

Nationally, an average of 33 percent of uninsured children did not see a doctor for a year, a number more concentrated in minority populations, according to the report.

Twenty percent of uninsured African-American children went a year without a doctor visit, said Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, president and chief executive of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

"I grew up in a very poor neighborhood. We didn't go to the doctor -- we went to the emergency room," said salsa legend Willie Colon of his childhood in the Bronx, N.Y., where his uninsured family went to the hospital only if they thought "we really weren't going to make it."

Meredith Josephs sees that kind of thinking daily at La Clinica del Pueblo, where she is medical director at the free clinic. Many patients are eligible, she said, but the language barrier and fear that illegal immigrants will be turned in to authorities often keep Latino families from applying.

In other neighborhoods, the complexity of the system keeps some families from getting insurance. Studies document improvements in coverage once states simplify their qualification process, said Cindy Mann, a research professor at Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute.

Employment numbers looking good in 2005

By Matt Whetstone, Cadillac News

August 5, 2005

Area counties are seeing more people working than the same time last year, according to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth.

Meanwhile, the four area counties also saw slight drops in June, pushing at least one below the state level.

Missaukee County stands at 6.4 percent following the compilation of June numbers, one-half of a percent below the state unemployment level.

"Missaukee County, over the month, has seen a typical rate decline," said Jim Rhein, a labor market analyst with the DLEG. "Employment is up and unemployment is down."

The real story in northern Michigan has been the year-long trend of decline. Missaukee County's rate has dropped 1.5 percent since June 2004. Likewise, Lake County has dropped 1.4 percent, Osceola County is down 1.7 percent and Wexford County is down 1.2 percent.

"After a couple years of being pretty stagnant employment has flattened out in the northern counties," Rhein said. "The rates have declined and they have pretty much declined across the board."

"This is really the first time in quite some time you can point to over the year change and say there's a positive change."

Over the year, Wexford County has seen big gains in employment with the number growing by 450. Being the largest labor market in the area, Rhein said the rates do not fluctuate as much.

Charlene Schlueter, associate director of the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, said employment is clearly improving even though June is typically a time of high employment.

Although tourism does fuel some job growth during the summer, Schlueter said travel is more dependent on the economy.

"What people do on their vacations is a sign of how they feel about their financial situation," Schlueter said.

In the last year, the economic talk has been recovery. Much of the United States has been in that

mode since early 2003, Schlueter said, but the same can be said about northern Michigan in the last year.

From a historical perspective, Schlueter said Michigan's tardy recovery has held true for the past two decades.

"The Midwestern states have a harder time recovering because of the large number of manufacturing job losses," she said.

Before spreading too much good news about economic recovery, Schlueter pointed out that Michigan was tied for the highest unemployment rate in the nation after the release of May's numbers.

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Published August 5, 2005

Lansing demands proof MI Works site safe to fix Reconstruction of collapsed roof awaits report on building's integrity

By Stacey Range
Lansing State Journal

City officials say they won't allow reconstruction of the collapsed Capital Area Michigan Works building until engineers prove remaining sections are safe.

"We have to protect the safety of our citizens," said Christine Segerlind, manager of Lansing's building safety office. "We don't want them going into an unsafe building."

Segerlind said the report on the building's structural integrity also might include a cause of the June 25 implosion, but the city will not need to know what brought down the roof over the center section before reconstruction can begin.

No one was inside the building at the time, and weather does not appear to have been a factor.

Eyde Co. owns the four-year-old, nearly 24,000-square-foot building at 2110 S. Cedar St.

Eyde has hired Ledy Design Group to determine the cause of the collapse.

Several independent investigations are under way by engineers representing other involved parties, including the maker and installer of the roof's truss system and the insurance agency for Capital Area Michigan Works.

It could be months before the reports are done and a cause is known, said Mark Clouse, general counsel to Eyde Co.

Workers have removed the demolished center section, which measured about 7,500 square feet.

The company does not plan to rebuild the north and south wings. Clouse said a preliminary study of the two wings has found them to be structurally sound.

Ledy Design Group of Lansing is performing a more extensive study of the wings so the city can issue a new occupancy permit, he said. Eyde hopes to have that report to the city next month.

Eyde chose not to tear down the entire building because each section was built independently of the other areas with separate truss systems supporting each area's roof, Clouse said. The collapsed center section, which had an extreme vaulted ceiling, was supported by what are

known as scissor trusses, and it was believed they did not need walls or posts for support.

Eyde hopes to have the building reopened in early 2006.

In the meantime, Capital Area Michigan Works will continue working out of the former Walter French Academy building next door.

“This is working well for us now,” said Kate Tykocki, spokeswoman for the job placement and training agency.

Contact Stacey Range at 377-1157 or srange@lsj.com.

Maximus ordered to repay state for bonuses

Executives got \$35,400 in tax funds

By STEVE SCHULTZE

sschultze@journalsentinel.com

Posted: Aug. 4, 2005

State officials Thursday ordered the largest Wisconsin Works welfare reform contractor to repay more than \$35,400 in bonuses given to executives from 2002 through 2004 with taxpayer money. Those bonuses to top managers of Maximus Inc., were contrary to plans approved by the Department of Workforce Development, said Roberta Gassman, the department secretary. Bonuses to top executives were not allowed because of their already high base salaries, she said. "Bonuses to senior managers were never included, nor approved," she said.

In a letter to Maximus Vice President Jerry Stepaniak, the agency was ordered to repay \$35,400 within 10 working days.

Another \$6,107 bonus to a Maximus W-2 project director in 2003 was allowed because the firm's bonus plan didn't forbid paying bonuses for that job until 2004, Gassman said.

Also, some \$680,000 in bonuses to non-management staff at Maximus using W-2 money were not challenged by the state.

Maximus, which holds an \$86.2 million W-2 contract, has said its bonuses were justified because it has a larger caseload than other agencies and a corporate policy favoring bonuses as rewards for good performance.

But company officials have said they won't fight the state on the repayment order.

From the Aug. 5, 2005, editions of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Have an opinion on this story? [Write a letter to the editor](#) or start an [online forum](#).

Raising the minimum wage will cost jobs for Michigan

Plan would make state unemployment problem worse

The Detroit News

August 5, 2005

Michigan has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the nation. So what do organized labor and some Michigan Democrats plan to do? Put a higher minimum wage on the state ballot next year, which could throw more people out of work. There is a word for this kind of economic thinking: dumb.

Polls so far show that most voters would approve the higher state minimum wage. The current federal minimum wage is \$5.15. The ballot proposal would raise the state's minimum by \$2 to \$7.15, the third highest in the nation.

A chapter heading in a book by Nobel Prize-winning economist Gary Becker of the University of Chicago makes the effect of such an increase brutally clear: "It's Simple. Hike the Minimum Wage, and You Put People Out of Work." Yes, there are some studies that purport to show that minimum wage increases don't affect jobs, but they are not the majority opinion in the economics profession.

In the real world, owners of businesses in a position to hire minimum wage employees worry about the effect of such an increase on their ability to operate in Michigan. A hike in the minimum wage, says Mark Mitra, owner of several Arby's restaurants, could affect his pay costs for both managers and hourly workers.

That's because, as Mitra told The Detroit News, a higher minimum wage would have a "ratchet" effect on all of his wage and salary costs, pushing all of his pay levels higher. The higher minimum "is an unaffordable proposition for me."

Mitra, reported The News, is now scouting for more locations for restaurants. But if he refrains from opening them because of higher wage costs, jobs that would have existed will never materialize.

The "ratchet" effect on wages is one of the reasons organized labor supports higher minimum wages. Unions, whose members are already earning incomes well above the

minimum, can use them as the basis for seeking higher pay. In the process, the young and the unskilled will lose a chance to begin climbing the economic ladder.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm has called a higher minimum wage a matter of "fairness." But putting entry-level jobs beyond the reach of the youngest, least-skilled and most economically vulnerable workers is hardly compassionate or fair.

How much more difficult and expensive do the governor, state Democrats and organized labor want to make job creation in Michigan?

Friday, August 5, 2005

Wayne Briefs

Detroit News staff reports and wire services

Wayne County

Man charged in child Web sex case

A 31-year-old Saginaw man was arraigned Tuesday in 31st District Court in Hamtramck on charges of illegal use of the Internet and sexually abusive behavior to children. Joseph Sayan was arrested July 30 by Wayne County Sheriff's Department officers in Macomb County. Police say Sayan chatted online with a sheriff's deputy posing as a parent of two young girls, ages 7 and 12. Sayan arranged to meet the parent at that location so he could have sex with the girls, authorities said. Sayan's preliminary examination was Thursday. A trial date has not been set.

Infant dies after fan falls on top of her

Friday, August 05, 2005

By Ken Kolker and Nate Reens

The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- A 3-month-old girl suffocated when a fan fell from a window and landed in her crib, police said.

"It was terrible, a very tragic thing," said Dr. Stephen Cohle, the Kent County medical examiner, who had never seen such a death in 23 years as a pathologist.

Ava Nicole Buck was sleeping face-down Monday in her crib at the family's home in Eastown. The fan was in a window, slightly higher than the bed railing, to help make the baby's room comfortable on a 90-degree day, Capt. Jeff Hertel said.

The fan, weighing slightly less than 10 pounds, had pushed Ava's face into the mattress. The girl's mother told police she had checked her daughter two to three hours earlier.

At 11 pounds, the baby probably wasn't strong enough to hold up her head against the fan or roll over, Cohle said.

"The only difference between this and SIDS is we know what happened," he said, referring to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, in which babies die unexpectedly.

Ava's parents, Joshua and Shelly Buck, and two siblings gathered with relatives Thursday for a graveside service in Allendale.

"There's no hopelessness at all," the father said. "We're broken-hearted, but know we shared in the joy of her life. ... God has a plan and we may never understand why, but there's a reason."

Ava was born May 5 and seemed more content as an infant than her brother, Noah, and sister, Zoe, Joshua Buck said.

Buck and a college friend, Jason Grate, have started a church in Eastown, Greenhouse Ministries. About 30 members often gather at Kava House, a coffee shop on Lake Drive SE.

Memorial contributions may be made to the church's children's ministries at www.greenhouseministries.org.

Ava also is survived by her grandparents Michael and Cindy Buck, of Marion, Ind., and John and Jean Syswerda, of Allendale.

Child fingerprinting offered at Art Van stores

HOMETOWN HEADLINES

GENESEE COUNTY

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Friday, August 05, 2005

By Rhonda S. Sanders rsanders@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6374

A free child I.D. fingerprinting program will be offered Sunday at all Art Van Furniture stores, including locations in Burton and Flint Township.

From 2-4 p.m., parents and guardians can bring their children to the store to be fingerprinted and complete personal information cards that are useful to law enforcement officials in missing person searches and other emergencies.

Participants will be given the information cards and prints to take home for safekeeping.

Program materials have been provided by AAA of Michigan.

The Burton store is at 4095 E. Court St. and the Flint Township store is at 4577 Miller Road.

Friday, August 5, 2005

Livingston Briefs

Detroit News staff reports and wire services

Howell

Gleaners open house set for Aug. 18

Gleaners Community Food Bank of Livingston will hold an open house beginning at 5 p.m. Aug. 18 at the warehouse, 5924 Sterling Drive. Rob Hindley of TW & Friends and Scott Swamba of Ciao Amici will participate in an Iron Chef competition at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10. VIP tickets for \$20 each include reserved seating for the competition and tastes of the chef's dishes. Proceeds benefit the food bank. The Shared Harvest Pantry, a Gleaners emergency food program, has seen an increase of 35 percent in the number of people served this year. The pantry serves up to 1,000 Livingston County residents per month -- more than half are children and senior citizens. For information, call Erica Karfonta at (866) 453-2637.

Friday, August 5, 2005

Slain homeless man enjoyed helping people

Robert Warner

The Enquirer

Battle Creek Police took a suspect into custody late Thursday in connection with the slaying of Anthony Dewayne Headen, whose badly beaten body was discovered earlier in the day. According to a news release, the suspect, whom police did not name, was located at 124 Walters Ave.

According to the release, the Calhoun County Prosecutor's office will file a charge of open murder. Police also are seeking a second man who they say was either present or involved in the assault.

An autopsy is scheduled at 10:30 a.m. today at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing.

Headen's body was found along the Grand Trunk railroad tracks near M-66 just south of downtown Battle Creek at 7:12 a.m. Thursday. Police said he'd suffered severe blunt-force trauma, enough to kill him, though they awaited autopsy results to be sure.

Someone walking along the railroad tracks in the early morning spotted his body and called police, Chief David Headings said.

Headings said officers were talking to homeless people who live in the area of the rail underpass and a nearby wooded area in hopes of finding witnesses.

Friends, meanwhile, were dealing with the shock of his death and conjuring up their best memories of a man who lived without a home but carried his love for his family everywhere he went.

The Rev. Mike Sparks of Resurrection Power Ministries said he was shocked to hear of Headen's death.

Sparks painted a picture of a man who loved his family and had a deep faith in God. He also remembers Headen as a hard worker with a big appetite.

"For a little man, Tony was a big eater," Sparks said with a smile. "He could really put it away." But the 5-foot-5-inch Headen was a big helper, too, Sparks said, recalling that he worked in an adult foster care home and "wasn't afraid to get in there and get his hands dirty."

Sparks said he had known Headen since 1981, when Headen's family came to his church.

"He would do anything to help people out," Sparks said.

Though the family fell away from the church, Sparks said, he had seen a lot of Headen over the past 10 years, including some times at Haven of Rest Ministries, where Headen occasionally spent the night.

He had a lot of friends, and he often stayed with them, but when he didn't have any other options and it was cold, he'd stay at the shelter, Sparks said.

"He was an encourager," said Karl Downer, a minister at Resurrection Power. "Despite what he may have been going through, he always had a good word for someone else."

Downer said he often spoke of his family — his wife, three daughters and a son, and a granddaughter.

Circumstances in the family kept him from being able to see everyone, Sparks said, but "it was a great hope of his that one day they could all be together."

Jamie Schwalm, men's shelter manager at the Haven of Rest, said Headen had stayed there on and off for six or seven years, but hadn't spent the night since January.

"He was a good guy" who would help with chores and attended church groups through the Haven, Schwalm said.

And the one thing that Sparks would want everyone to know about his friend?

"Tony loved Jesus Christ. He really had a relationship with God."

Headen had spent some time in prison, serving nearly six years after pleading no contest to a charge of assault with intent to commit murder. Then 29, he was arrested in August 1987 and charged with shooting Archie L. Bynum after an argument. Bynum recovered from his wounds. The homicide was the fifth reported in Battle Creek this year.

Battle Creek police were encouraging anyone who saw Headen in his last 24 hours of life to come forward with information. They asked people to call police or Silent Observer at 964-3888.

Robert Warner can be reached at 966-0674 or rwarner@battlecr.gannett.com.

Special needs housing approved

Friday, August 05, 2005

By Greg Chandler

The Grand Rapids Press

ZEELAND -- A 12-unit housing development designed for people with special needs won approval Thursday from the Planning Commission.

Heritage Homes Inc. hopes to break ground next spring on the three-building development on a 2.56 acres at the north end of Elm Street, just north of McKinley Avenue. The nonprofit organization is buying the property from nearby Haven Park Nursing Home.

Residents who will live in the development have physical or developmental disabilities or have mental health issues and will receive services from various agencies to help them live independently.

The Zeeland site would be Heritage Homes' third multifamily development in Ottawa County. The organization earlier received approval for projects in Holland Township and Grand Haven. Heritage Homes last year received a \$231,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to be used for the three projects. It plans to seek additional federal grants for development of the Zeeland site, and also is getting funding assistance through an affordable housing program offered by the Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis, Heritage Homes executive director Stacy Pacanowski said.

Commissioner Glenn Kass had concerns about the safety of residents in the area, which is near the CSX railroad line and Washington Avenue and State Street.

Albert Doorn, program coordinator for residential services for Ottawa County Community Mental Health, said safety is a concern but says the presence of supportive services will help in that area.

Community Mental Health is one of several organizations who have contracted with Heritage Homes to provide supportive services to residents, along with the Center for Women In Transition and Senior Resources, Doorn said.

The Heritage Homes complex will include two 3-bedroom units, six 2-bedroom units, and four 1-bedroom apartments, according to the site plan presented to the Planning Commission.